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Canadian Suit Ties CIA to LSD, Brainwashing Studies

By KENNETH FREED, Times Staff Writer

TORONTO—Between 1953 and 1963, nine people entered a Montreal psychiatric clinic seeking treatment for a variety of illnesses ranging from depression to alcoholism to arthritis. However, instead of being helped, the six men and three women charge, they became test subjects for American intelligence agents exploring ways to control the human mind.

Their claim is that without their knowledge or consent, they were fed doses of drugs, including mind-altering LSD, and subjected to radical brainwashing experiments, involving long periods of forced sleep and other unorthodox procedures, proposed and financed by the Central Intelligence Agency.

In a long-running lawsuit, the nine Canadians allege that their stay at the Allan Memorial Clinic and their treatment by its director, the late Dr. Ewen Cameron, left them with permanent mental damage and has affected their ability to lead normal lives.

Each is asking for \$175,000 (in U.S. dollars) in damages and an apology from the U.S. government. Although the suit was filed in a federal district court in Washington, D.C., five years ago, the case still has not come to trial and lawyers for the nine people say they are frustrated by the government's tactics.

Joseph Rauh, a well-known civil liberties attorney who represents the nine, said in a telephone interview from his Washington office that the government has prevented key witnesses, particularly former CIA agents, from giving depositions and has forced him to file time-consuming pretrial motions sometimes taking two years to resolve.

"The CIA strategy," he said, "is to stonewall until I'm not able to continue with the case. At my ripe old age of almost 75 there is only a limited time I can practice, and they are stalling for all it's worth."

The CIA says it does not discuss cases in litigation and the State Department and the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa add only that Secretary of State George P. Shultz's legal adviser is studying the matter.

Rauh and some Canadian government officials who do not want to be identified are nearly as critical of the Canadian government's attitude as they are of the CIA, charging that External Affairs Minister Joe Clark has not acted firmly in the matter for fear of upsetting Shults and other Reagan Administration officials.

Canadian Asks Shults

A spokesman for Clark said the minister has brought up the case with Shults on two occasions since mid-May but has received no reply other than that the matter is being reviewed by the State Department's attorney.

Calling this an overly cautious approach, Rauh said, "The Canadian government is weaker than a watered-for-four-shifts-of-relatives. I am flabbergasted at the lack of response. . . . Clark can't even get a 'no' from Shults."

Rauh and some Canadians want Clark to threaten to take the case to the World Court at The Hague. They say that the CIA and the U.S. government breached Canadian sovereignty.

"This could be settled in five minutes if Clark said he was going to The Hague," the American lawyer went on, but "Shults treats him like a gnat on his forehead; he just brushes him away."

A Canadian external affairs official added, "It is clear that Clark doesn't want to upset the Americans right now and it is government policy to downplay any differences that crop up" between the two countries.

Although the American government has refused to settle or apologize and is fighting the case in the court, the CIA—both in 1977 and in court papers filed in 1980—acknowledged its involvement with Cameron's work after charges were made public.

American author John Marks first disclosed the CIA role after noting in a 1978 report of the Rockefeller Commission a brief mention of the agency's interest in exploring mind control through the use of drugs and other techniques.

He asked for all pertinent documents under the Freedom of Information Act, received 16,000 pages of material and found references to Cameron's work at the Allan clinic and the fact that he had received funds from a CIA front organization.

Marks presented his findings in a 1977 book called "In Search of the Manchurian Candidate." In it, he referred to several articles that Cameron had written for various American and Canadian medical journals.

In a deposition, former CIA Director Stansfield Turner told Rauh that the experiments had taken place and that "the (CIA) unit conducting the experiment simply had such autonomy that not many outsiders could look in and ask what was going on."

Also, sources close to the case have said that two former CIA operations officers based in Canada in the late 1970s acknowledged the agency's involvement and even secretly apologized to the Canadian government.

The same sources said the two men, Stacy Hulse and John Kenneth Knus, agreed to give a deposition to Rauh confirming the

CIA role and their apology but that they were prevented from doing so by the CIA's invoking of regulations limiting public testimony by even retired employees.

Rauh has filed a motion to compel the CIA to permit their testimony, but the judge has delayed a ruling.

In addition, there are more than 2,000 pages of documentation in the public archives in Ottawa concern-

ing Cameron's experiments, including several documents that deal with letters between high Canadian health officials and Cabinet members concerning the work at the Allan Memorial Clinic, which is associated with Montreal's prestigious McGill University.

These papers point to radical uses of drugs, including LSD, and the injection of large doses of insulin to induce comas, sometimes for 16 hours. Cameron, whose work was highly regarded by his professional peers, according to contemporary news accounts, also used

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